

The principles of the Constitution have never been successfully invaded, and the spirit of innovation is far less active now than it was in the first half of the century.

Now has the kindred possibility of encroachment by one department of Government upon another been realized. The vigorous denunciation which follows the occasional manifestation of a tendency on the part of the Executive branch to disregard the expressed will of the Legislative, as for instance under President Cleveland in connection with the Fisheries dispute, is not less satisfactory and less hopeful for the future than popular acquiescence in the failure of the Legislative branch to overawe the Executive, as during the Administration of President Hayes. It is unnecessary to allude to alleged breaches made in the Constitution during the hurricane of civil war, further than to say that self-preservation is the first law of nations as well as of individuals.

We often hear the assertion, sometimes flippant and sometimes regretful, that respect for religion and morality has declined; and it is possible that even the discernment of Washington would be at fault if he were suddenly brought face to face with modern civilization; but it is the spirit that quickeneth, and we are not yet compelled to admit that the spiritual forces behind new forms of thought and new modes of expression are less vital and pervasive than they ever were. And certainly "institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge," which Washington included with religion and morality among the inevitable conditions of national existence, have contributed to an extent which he could never have imagined.

When Washington enjoined upon his countrymen the sacred preservation of the public credit the possibility of such an expenditure as the Nation was forced to make between 1861 and 1865 in defence of its life was simply inconceivable, but the duty of discharging in peace the debts incurred in war has been so rigidly construed as to present one of the noblest manifestations of national character the world has ever seen. We are no longer in danger of "ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden which we ourselves ought to bear," but rather of accepting too large a share of the sacrifices which were made not less for posterity than for ourselves.

So part of the Farewell Address is more solemn and insistent, and none applies a more searching test of Washington's amazing foresight than the part which discusses our foreign relations. It corresponds so perfectly not only to our unchangeable policy, but to the universal sentiment, that it had been the first article of the Constitution, instead of an individual's free-will offering, it could not have been more explicitly adhered to. Washington urged the people to friendship with all nations, and warned them against "inveterate antipathies" and "passionate attachments." It is an extraordinary thing, when human frailties and the vicissitudes of a century are considered, that there should be to-day no country in the world which as a political entity, or for whose citizens as social units, the government and people of the United States have either a paramount affection or a rooted dislike. Until one has made a mental circuit of the globe in search of an exception, he fails to realize the fact and its singularity. It costs us no effort to hold the scales even, because there is no temptation to tip them. We have more in common with our kin beyond the sea than with any other foreign people; their civilization is intelligible and congenial to our own, and a thousand individual traits unite us, but the community of laws, language and of race, so far from kindling a "passionate attachment," has not even inspired a universal preference. Still more fortunate, if not more remarkable, is it that no foreign nation is so widely separated from us in instincts and understanding as to have become the object of an "inveterate antipathy." There are nations whose ways are not our ways, whose thoughts are not our thoughts, and whose systems of government are the very antithesis of freedom, but all that we are able to find in our hearts against them is a lack of sympathy. This state of feeling has become a second nature, but if there were no other evidence of the fact, Washington's earnest longing that we might attain unto it is conclusive evidence that it is not native, but acquired. How wonderful, again, the relation between prophetic enterprise and practical fulfillment!

This bright analysis will not be valueless if it succeeds to even a few of The Tribune readers an attentive study of the Farewell Address. That outflow of a lofty spirit furnished to the contemporaries of Washington an imperfectly recognized measure of his sanctity and devotion. To ingenuous minds in every generation that the end of time it must appear almost miraculous.

## WASHINGTON AS A POET.

AN EXACT COPY OF HIS ONLY POEM.

A young lady, upon whom the great Washington in his youth looked with somewhat tender approval was Miss Cary. To her he wrote his only poem, the MS. of which now reposes in the State Department at Washington. The following is an exact copy of this poem, punctuation, capitals and all:

Oh Ye Gods why should my Poor, Besieged Heart

Stand to approve thy Mighty and Power,

At last surrender to Cupids feather'd Dart

And now let's Bleeding every Hour

For her that's Pitifuls of my grief and Woes,

And will not on my Pity take

Ye sleep amongst my most inveterate Foes

And with gladness never wish to wake

In defeating sleepings let my Lyctids close;

That in an entrapped Dream I may

In a soft helling sleep and gentle repose

Possess those joys denied by Day.

GLADSTONE ON WASHINGTON.

From his letter to C. W. Smiley.

When I first read in detail the "Life of Washington" I was profoundly impressed with the moral elevation and greatness of his character, and I found myself at a loss to name among the statesmen of all ages or countries, many of the rank and talents who could be compared with him. I made no disparagement of the politicians, the men of my own craft and calling, when in my own land and my own experience I have found no better. I could name among them, however, none to come near even to him. But I must shut out the last half century from the comparison. I will then say that, if among the pedestal supplied by time and fortune, I saw one higher than Washington, I must be required at a moment's notice to name the latest occupant for it. I think my choice at any time during the last forty-five years, would have lighted, and it would have light, upon Washington.

HOW WASHINGTON TOOK THE OATH.

The last great study in the schools just now are naturally connected with the centennial of the incorporation of Washington. The other day, one of our leading public schools, after relating the account of the first inauguration, said, "The Commissaries are therefore directed to issue the letters of appointment, addressed to President George Washington of Federal Hall, by Robert Livingston, chancellor of the State of New York."

Very accurate, all but that they chanceryed. An other day, under question about the revolution, said, "Some men were men, who wanted everything as a man's honor."

AN AMERICAN'S PATRON SAINT.

From the Minneapolis Journal.

A Minnesotan lady who was for a few days with the West MacLaurie party on the Continent, has an amusing story of her visit to Munich. She says, "I like other Americans, I had not intended to go to Europe, but to stay in business and many other, as I thought, important questions. When I told them that my given name was Donizetti they stormed and threatened me. They would not believe that my name and that of his daughter after the celebrated Italian singer."

"The next question which astonished me was, 'Who is your patron saint?' We are not accustomed to having patron saints in America, but I, which stated that I could not perceive them to believe, their persistence was so annoying that I concluded to have a patron saint for myself."

"The official name of MacLaurie, who are to Squads by non-commissioned Officers, who are to prevent their bathing in the heat of the day, or remain too long in the water."

Washington looked carefully after the medals of his Army, and gaming and duelling met with severe reprobation and punishment at his hands.

"My singular saint and my peculiar name were much to the taste of the German women, who wanted me to be their patron saint."

"The German girls, however, said, 'It was solemnly recorded opposite my name, and it was solemnly

recited before the army, and it was solemnly